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The leak of things to come

Dec 26, 2014 - Aditi Pancholi



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Singer Madonna recently blasted music pirates for leaking her songs online. **After pop queen Madonna branded the leak of several new songs as 'artistic rape' and 'a form of terrorism', those in the business of music express their unanimous anger against online leak of creative content**

Queen of pop, Madonna recently described the leak of her songs from her much-anticipated album as "artistic rape" and "a form of terrorism." A miffed Madonna was quoted saying, "These are early leaked demos, half of which won't even make it on my album. The other half have changed and evolved."

Following the leak she reportedly said, "Obviously there is a person, or a group of people, behind this that were essentially terrorising me. I don't want to sound alarming, but certainly that's how I felt. It's one thing if someone comes into your house and steals a painting off your wall: that's also a violation, but, your work, as an artist, that's devastating."

Some musicians feel that using violent terms like 'rape' and 'form of terrorism' is blowing it out of proportions. Others completely empathise with the artist and feel it is encroaching on someone's personal property.

City-based singer-songwriter Pragnya Wakhlu says, "Online leak is like good publicity for the artist because everyone starts talking about it and eventually even people not interested in your music get curious and listen to it. Firstly, the artist should take it as a compliment as the people who are leaking it consider their music important enough to leak it in the first place."

"Secondly, loyal fans will anyway buy the music and after the leak people who haven't heard your music (and wouldn't have bought it anyway) also get exposed to it," says Pragnya, adding, "Online leaking is not something I personally encourage but I think artists should also look at the positive side of things, and yes, in Madonna's case she certainly seems to be over-exaggerating."

Leaks are not restricted to Hollywood or Western music industry, in India too it has been a recurrent problem. The makers and actors of PK were extra careful to keep details of their film a top secret. Nonetheless, speculations and information about the characters kept leaking out time and again. Similarly, just days before its music launch, the songs of Vijay Sethupathi's upcoming film leaked too. Ranbir Kapoor was miffed when pictures from the sets of his upcoming film Tamasha were leaked on the Internet and he even requested director Imtiaz Ali to increase security on the sets. Earlier also there have been several cases of leaks of online trailers, music, film and videos.

"Last year Adnan Sami's comeback album had leaked online days before its official launch. A song from Akshay Kumar-Sonakshi Sinha starrer Joker had leaked before its launch. Amitabh Bachchan-starrer Paa was stolen and uploaded online on the first day of its release. A fan of U2 band heard the music coming from Bono's holiday villa, recorded it on his mobile phone and posted it

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Columnists

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Shankar Roychowdhury

The Indian Army observes January 15 as Army Day every year to commemorate that day in 1949 when Lt. Gen. (later Field Marshal) K.M.

Time for a rethink?



S. Nihal Singh

What happened at the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo was condemnable without reserve and the world's media, including in India, have risen in solidarity.

on networking sites. Details about Kanye West's new album, including title, track list and release date had hit the Internet and there have been numerous such cases that have shocked the creative artists. In this digital era, one needs to be extremely careful while handling online medium to propagate one's work," says music, film connoisseur and blogger Arijit Sengupta.

Numerous precautions need to be taken by creative people while sharing their content online, suggests cyber expert and lawyer Pavan Duggal. He informs, "The complete content should never be shared on the Internet and it should, as far as possible, be protected by digital rights management. One should not trust strangers while dealing with one's original content as behind the cloak of anonymity, there could be cyber criminals waiting to deprive you of your rights. Social media users should never trust any calls/emails asking for information/verification of their bank details or any such personal account details as the same could be a phishing attack."

Also, if you are a well-known public figure with a considerable fan following, avoid publishing any content, the disclosure of which could embarrass you, asserts Duggal.

Time and again Internet has proved that it is a double-edged sword that has both pros and cons for creative industry, feels Jishnu Dasgupta, bassist for Indian folk and fusion band Swarathma. It is like a baby being forced to be born prematurely.

He says, "I understand and empathise with the reaction of Madonna. Artists are very finicky about their work; even after the release you are never completely satisfied with the final outcome. When the process is just half-way and somebody takes undue advantage and leaks your stuff online, you are bound to feel violated and cheated."

"People need to understand the artist's angst when something like this happens as the work of art or music is something very dear to a musician's heart. You can't force a baby to be born when it is still taking shape and in the development stage. Apt measures need to be taken to curb such instances of online leaks," concludes Dasgupta.

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